

25 JULY 2006

SECRETARY-GENERAL SHOCKED BY COORDINATED ISRAELI ATTACK ON UNITED NATIONS OBSERVER POST IN LEBANON, WHICH KILLED TWO PEACEKEEPERS

The following statement by UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan was issued today in Rome:

I am shocked and deeply distressed by the apparently deliberate targeting by Israeli Defense Forces of a United Nations observer post in southern Lebanon that has killed two United Nations military observers, with two more feared dead.

This coordinated artillery and aerial attack on a long established and clearly marked United Nations post at Khiyam occurred despite personal assurances given to me by Prime Minister Ehud Olmert that United Nations positions would be spared Israeli fire. Furthermore, General Alain Pelligrini, the United Nations Force Commander in south Lebanon, had been in repeated contact with Israeli officers throughout the day on Tuesday, stressing the need to protect that particular United Nations position from attack.

I call on the Government of Israel to conduct a full investigation into this very disturbing incident, and demand that any further attack on United Nations positions and personnel must stop.

The names and nationalities of those killed are being withheld pending notification of their families. I extend sincere condolences to the families of our fallen peacekeepers.

<http://www.un.org/press/en/2006/sgsm10577.doc.htm>